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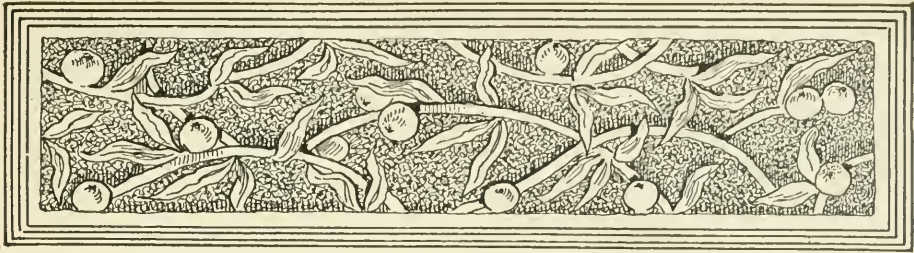






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## CATHOLICITY AND ITS GROWTH IN WORCESTER.

By JOHN J. RIORDAN, A. M.

The Heart of the Commonwealth, as the city of Worcester has been aptly termed, is a beautiful city. It teems to-day with varied industries and it includes in its population about as many nationalities as a great metropolis. Jew and Gentile, Caucasian and Mongolian all brush elbows in this thriving and growing municipality. But time was a half century or more ago when it was otherwise. Then Worcester, which had not attained to the dignity of anything more than a prosperous town, approaching so to speak its majority, was the conservative and model New England village, with few exceptions made up of the "old families" whose influence in the community had shaped its affairs for years almost indefinite in number and extending back before the days of the Revolution. But the men of those times must have come of goodly stock, for their descendants to-day are counted among the fairest and most liberal-minded of Worcester's citizens. They have been conservative but, all things considered, they have not been unfair. It would be strange if they should have welcomed with anything but suspicion, a people, the first of any foreigners, to come among them, and whose religion they had been taught for two hundred years to abominate. To their credit it may be truthfully said that to-day

the descendants of these old families, cordially and without narrowness of mind or purpose, welcome the Catholic Irish emigrants as men who have in them that which makes good citizens and companionable neighbors. There have been agitations, it is true, tending to stir up strife and with a purpose of creating hostility on the part of Protestants towards the Catholics. Indeed, where is the New England community that this could not be said of it at some time in its history? But in Worcester it has sprung without exception from among those who have done less for the welfare of the people than their Catholic brethren; who came later than the Irish and who gathered their inspirations of bigotry from other sources and received their training in other localities. These agitations, however, never assumed alarming proportions. Before they could do so the sounder sense of the better portion of the citizenship has always made itself known and felt, so that what may have seemed dangerous in the beginning has generally turned out either a shibboleth or a boomerang, harmful to its promoters and of no consequence to the Catholics.

The pioneers of sixty years ago, the first to settle in Worcester, and who are the predecessors of the present generation, held in affection and grati-



HIS GRACE, ARCHBISHOP WILLIAMS OF BOSTON.



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tude, William Lincoln the Historian, who was their first friend in Worcester; he quickly recognized their better qualities and stood by them in those early days when they most needed the support of such a friend. He came of a distinguished family; the son of Jefferson's attorney-general; a brother of a Governor of Massachusetts, and himself a man of distinguished attainments, but whose early death ended what promised to be a celebrated career as a litterateur and scholar in history. It was he who came to the assistance of the Irish Catholics of sixty years ago, few in numbers and unknown in the community and with no one among themselves of sufficient influence to combat the suspicion and hostility that prevailed. He purchased the land upon which the first house for religious worship for the Catholics was erected and immediately turned it over to them for this purpose. The Catholics of a later day remember with affection, as those of to-day revere, the memory of Alexander H. Bullock, who was their neighbor as he was indeed their friend. He, with the late lamented idol of Irish hearts in this Commonwealth, Judge McCafferty, the first Catholic to sit upon the bench in Massachusetts, and whose memory is especially revered by Worcester Irishmen and their children, fought, in opposition to the sentiment that then prevailed, in his efforts to place the college of the Holy Cross upon an equality with other colleges in the State. When Governor Bullock, then Speaker of the State House of Representatives, defended the Catholics as good citizens and entitled to the same prerogatives as those who differed from them in religious opinion, he did what few of the political leaders of the time had the courage to do. Fanaticism prevailed as it never prevailed before or since, and he literally took his future political life in his hands in a cause that he knew was right, though unpopular, and which presaged disaster to any future political preferment.



THE LATE BISHOP O'REILLY.

Men who since that time have become distinguished in the councils of the State and nation were then deeply immersed in the inner machinations of secret societies who believed, and let us trust, honestly, though ignorantly, that the Roman Catholic Church was a menace to republican institutions. No wonder that the Catholics of Worcester of years ago revere the memory of Governor Bullock. A still later generation equally respect and admire the first citizen of the present Massachusetts, Senator Hoar. He, too, found the seeds of good citizenship in them when others doubted, and long before he indicated the greatness that was evidently inherent in him and which has since attested his worth as one of the foremost statesmen of the nation, he proved himself their friend ready to sound their praises, as he did not hesitate to point out their faults, in the public gatherings, where they may have come under discussion. These men and others, trained on similar lines of broad culture and safe judgment, whose ancestors have been identified with Worcester for a hun-

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dred years or more, have been the friends of the Irish Catholics from the time when the first few pioneers came in the early thirties. No wonder that the Catholics of to-day insist that Worcester is a good city to live in. They have little reason to think otherwise. They have attained an enviable position in the community and their representatives are respected and courted by all classes of the people. But what they are, they owe to their fathers who came here in the early days and whose struggles against an active hostility to maintain the faith of their fatherland can be but dimly realized in these days when the Catholic has no such animosity to encounter, but is rather weighed up on his individual merits and without regard to his religious belief. To those pioneers without whose material aid there would be slow progress in building up a Catholic sentiment should be accorded praise for their many sacrifices. They labored under difficulties such as the younger generation to-day cannot realize; but they never faltered. They came of a race that knows better perhaps than most other races in the world, that the best things in life are the glory of God and the salvation of men. They gave of their time and their money, and little the early settlers could have had to spare; but of what they had they gave freely, and the first Catholic church in Worcester was finally built within a few years after these emigrants took up their residence in the town. It is related by the early settlers, few if any of whom are living today, that when it was first proposed to build a Catholic church it caused great excitement among the native-born, and expressions of dissatisfaction were freely heard and threats of destroying the building were even as freely made — for many of the natives looked upon the Irish as something akin to barbarians. This feeling of alarm and anxiety must have been quickly allayed, and probably did not dominate the entire community. As the Irish began to be understood they

were received kindly and in those early times were encouraged in their struggle to support themselves and to give an education to their children. During all these years since that time they have made every sacrifice for their descendants while they have clung firmly to their religion, an object lesson to those about them of the fact that the closer they cling to their religion and the observance of its rites, the better citizens they are. Worcester has to-day, in proportion to its entire population, larger numbers of educated Catholics of Irish birth or antecedents than of any other nationality or creed.

Catholic lawyers and doctors are numerous, exercising a commanding influence in the community. Catholics are equally numerous as instructors of youth, and are numbered in every branch of business, while many places of honor and large responsibility are creditably filled by them. They have their own savings bank; they direct one of the best hospitals in the city, whose worth is so well recognized that Protestants in large numbers seek treatment there, and the Catholic College of Holy Cross gives added fame to Worcester. In a word, the Catholic pioneer of sixty or fifty or even less years ago could not have dreamed that his efforts and those of the other Irish emigrants in Worcester were to bear such ample fruit. Catholic citizens of to-day owe their present acknowledged standing to three conditions: the sacrifices made by their fathers, not as a rule educated men, but possessed of that honest pride which is an inherent instinct of the race; the opportunities for advanced education afforded by a Catholic college situated at their door; and finally and of greater weight in making the Irish Catholics good citizens and good men, a devoted priesthood, composed with few exceptions of men whose lives have been ideal, who have carefully watched over and guided their flocks and who as a rule have held the confidence and respect of Protestants and Catholics alike.

It is more than seventy years ago



SUFFRAGAN BISHOPS OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF BOSTON.

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| Rt. Rev. Denis M. Bradley, D. D.<br>Bishop of Manchester, N. H. | Rt. Rev. Louis De Goesbriand, D. D.<br>Bishop of Burlington, Vt. | Rt. Rev. James A. Healy, D.<br>Bishop of Portland, Me.      |
| Rt. Rev. Thos. D. Beaven, D. D.<br>Bishop of Springfield, Mass. | Rt. Rev. Michael Tierney, D. D.<br>Bishop of Hartford, Conn.     | Rt. Rev. Matthew Harkins, D.<br>Bishop of Providence, R. I. |



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since the first Catholics came to Worcester. They were chiefly Irish emigrants who were attracted by the building of the Blackstone Canal, which promised for central Massachusetts an outlet to the sea by way of Providence, Rhode Island. This work continued for two years or more and many of the laborers remained to settle

went on the number of Catholics increased and soon they began to feel the need of the ministrations of their religion to enable them to combat the difficulties surrounding them. They keenly felt the need of a priest of God to baptize their children and bring to their dying the consolation of religion. Therefore these humble laborers, who,



RT. REV. MGR. THOMAS GRIFFIN, D. D., CHANCELLOR.

in the town. Later, when the construction of the Boston and Worcester Railroad and the western division to Albany was begun a much larger number came to assist in the work. It is universally acknowledged and often referred to by public speakers that this great project would have been much retarded without those Irish laborers, since they furnished the labor that otherwise, in those times, could not have been secured. As time

through every vicissitude, retained their faith, begged Bishop Fenwick, whose See embraced all New England, to send them a priest, whom they promised to assist in every way. But the Bishop of this great territory had but a little band of helpers and for a time could not satisfy the appeal. Within a year, however, their request was granted, and Father James Fitton came one Sunday every month to offer up for them the Holy Sacrifice of the

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Mass. He may well be termed the Missionary Priest of New England. Time and again he passed and re-

less than seventy years ago. To-day, instead of the single bishop of those times, six mitred princes of the Church



ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, WORCESTER.

passed through each of the New England States, wherever he thought his priestly ministrations might be required. He was one of the first natives of Boston to be consecrated with the Holy Oils of ordination, and that was

hold spiritual sway and hundreds of priests minister to the wants of the people. At least four grand cathedrals lift their lofty spires to heaven upon spots where Father Fitton preached, and administered the sacraments to



faithful and devoted bands of Catholics. Ofttimes with no covering but the broad canopy of heaven and upon a temporary and roughly constructed altar he offered up the sacrifice of the Mass. His labors were prodigious. Cold, hunger, storm, suffering, nothing seemed able to stay this saintly man. He made the beginning of ten parishes in Connecticut, twelve in Massachusetts and others in the different New England States. Later, when his unremitting labors and increasing years began to warn him that a life of such hardship and activity must cease, he was stationed in Boston, where he continued his work for the glory of God, erecting three churches in that city. To his zeal for Catholic education the Catholics of Worcester and all New England are indebted for the beginning of that splendid educational institution, the College of the Holy Cross. This was the character of the priest who built the first Catholic church in Worcester. He found his flock, though few in numbers, determined and anxious to have a church of their own. At the first Mass that Father Fitton celebrated the sum of five hundred dollars was collected to form the nucleus of a church fund, a remarkable sum in those days and probably contributed by less than fifty persons. Encouraged by the spirit of zeal on the part of his people, Father Fitton immediately began to look about him to obtain a desirable church site. He encountered difficulties, owing to the objection of some of the natives to selling land for such a purpose as the building of a Catholic church; but, as has been stated, the spot where the present St. John's stands was finally secured through the kindly assistance of William Lincoln. It was the heart of an old pasture, with only a by-path running through it. The corner-stone of a small church 62x32 feet was laid July 7, 1834, and was dedicated in 1836, much to the joy of the few Catholics of that day. It was named Christ Church and it was the

first church in the now diocese of Springfield. It was a modest beginning and did not presage the remarkable growth of Catholicity in Worcester since that time. Twelve churches are now occupied for Catholic worship, some of them among the handsomest church structures in the State. The "old" St. John's, as the older residents affectionately term it, stands to-day almost as it stood when it was dedicated in 1846, by Right Rev. Bishop Fitzpatrick. It succeeded Christ Church, which in ten years had become too small to accommodate all the Catholics in town. It was considered an elegant structure in those days, as indeed it must have been, for it still retains an imposing and solid appearance.

There have been many able and eloquent priests connected with this parish, among them Rev. John Boyce, a distinguished lecturer and a gifted writer, who is known to the world under the nom de plume of Paul Peppergrass.

"Shandy McGuire," one of Father Boyce's first literary ventures, attracted the notice of two continents, and was translated into the different languages, while the literary world predicted for its author a brilliant career. Dr. Brownson, in a review of this book at the time of its publication, assigned to Father Boyce rank as a writer above Moore, Griffin or any of the Irish writers of that day. The late Bishop O'Reilly has been heard to say that he considered Father Boyce when at his best, the most eloquent preacher he had heard, and in his judgment superior to the great Dominican, Father Tom Burke. While the outside world knew Father Boyce best as a man of extraordinary literary talents and eloquence, his own parishioners in St. John's loved him for his holy zeal and his boundless acts of charity. His name has a lasting place in the memory of the Catholics of forty years ago. At his death in 1864 no less than one hundred prelates and priests and five

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thousand laymen were in attendance at his funeral obsequies.

The late Right Rev. P. T. O'Reilly, D. D., the first bishop of the Springfield diocese, went out from St. John's to assume the labors of his episcopacy. He came as an assistant to Father Boyce in 1857, just after his own ordination to the priesthood, and here, as

close of his episcopacy a great diocese whose burden he had borne so successfully to the control of over two hundred loyal, learned and united priests.

The eloquent and scholarly rector of the Catholic University, Right Rev. Thomas J. Conaty, D. D., served his curacy in this church before he was



VERY REV. JOHN J. POWER, V. G.

curate and priest, zealously and lovingly, an example of every priestly virtue, he labored until his consecration in 1870, at the age of thirty-seven years, the then youngest bishop in the country. Bishop Healy said of him that "he found the diocese of wood and left it of precious stones." For twenty-two years he ruled the diocese with wisdom and love, building churches, schools, convents, hospitals and orphanages, and leaving at the

appointed to the pastorate of the Sacred Heart. The permanent rector of Chicopee, who did much for the younger people of Worcester and who is known as a pulpit orator of distinguished attainment, Rev. John J. McCoy, also served his curacy here, as likewise did Rev. Dr. Garrigan, the vice rector of the Catholic University. But after all that may be said in praise of the others, the priest who is best known by the present St.

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John's people is Mgr. Griffin, D. D., the present pastor, who came to St. John's fresh from his ordination to the Holy Priesthood. This was in 1867, during the pastorate of the late Bishop O'Reilly. "From him to whom much has been given much will be required" applies with peculiar force to Mgr. Griffin. When he succeeded to the charge of St. John's he assumed the administration of the affairs of the largest parish in the Springfield diocese. But he added to his priestly labors by the erection of the Notre Dame Convent School for Girls, the largest school of this description in the diocese. He later built a school of large proportion for boys, and planned it to meet the needs of six hundred scholars. He purchased the estate upon which was established in 1893 the House of Providence Hospital. In recognition of his great labors the Holy Father in 1889 made Father Griffin a domestic prelate, and in the same year he was further honored with the Doctorate of Divinity by St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, where he made his theological studies. To quote a prominent rector of the Springfield diocese who for eight years served as a curate at St. John's: "He is a strong man of clear head and honest heart. His learning is more solid and serious than showy. He is not an orator; but no man of the Springfield diocese can talk sounder sense or fill his sermons with greater weight of truth's real gold. He has had the revenues of a large and generous parish for years; yet those who know him best know him to be a poor man, who has spent his means in God's work and is now rounding out a good life in ceaseless watching of church and school and convent and hospital.

"Facile princeps!" Priest and layman, Catholic and Protestant, without exception accord this title to the clergyman longest in continuous service in Worcester, Very Rev. John J. Power,

D. D., the Vicar General of the diocese. No man in the community for forty years and more has exercised a greater influence among the people. He is distinguished for his learning, and as a pulpit orator has a charm and influence peculiarly his own. His reputation for eloquence is not confined to his own diocese, and his Lenten sermons for many years have attracted congregations only limited by the capacity of his church. With an outer bearing somewhat bordering on austerity, to those who know him best the simplicity and gentleness that always characterize a manly man are both shown in him to a marked degree. Among the older settlers and those of his own congregation he is invariably referred to by the most affectionate title of Father John. Punctuality, truthfulness and honesty are three virtues that emphasize themselves with him, and without these no one could expect to remain long worthy of his esteem. Rev. Dr. Power promoted the first public hospital the city ever knew. He maintains an orphanage now fostered by the diocese to some extent, but always dependent upon him for support. He has been a valuable member of the School Committee and a trustee of the Public Library,—in all positions a credit to himself, the city and the Catholic people. His first pastorate was St. Anne's, where he remained for sixteen years until 1872. In 1869, under his direction, was laid the corner-stone of St. Paul's Church, the finest church in Worcester and the most imposing church structure in the diocese. Its construction was an undertaking such as few men would dare to assume. Its cost was more than \$200,000, but to the shrewdness and business sagacity for which Dr. Power has always been distinguished, this magnificent structure now stands absolutely free from debt; and the hope of his life, as he feelingly expressed it when making the glad announcement

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a few years ago, has been consummated. "Whatever others may do after I have gone, with the help of God, St. Paul's shall never again during my pastorate be burdened with debt," was what he said to his congregation, and it is absolutely safe to say that this will prove true. His whole life has been to his people a lesson of

every action breathes of kindness, and he is as much beloved by his people as he is esteemed by his associates. He is the founder of the new St. Anne's Church, whose corner-stone was laid in 1885. Next to St. Paul's it is the most commanding Catholic Church in Worcester. Its cost was about \$80,000 and its seating capacity is 1,200. In



REV. JOHN BOYCE (Paul Peppergrass).

avoiding obligations difficult to meet and of living within their means.

When Dr. Power, after a sixteen years' pastorate, left St. Anne's for the new St. Paul's, he was succeeded by Rev. Dennis Scannell, who had served the few years of his curacy with him. No priest in the diocese is more beloved by his associates than is Father Scannell. As gentle as a child, his

1895 Father Scannell celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood, upon which occasion the people of Worcester, without regard to creed, united in presenting him a testimonial such as had never before been bestowed upon any pastor in Worcester. The fourth oldest pastor in point of service is Rev. Robert Walsh, who organized





REV. DANIEL F. MCGILLICUDDY.

and has been the only pastor of the Church of the Immaculate Conception. The corner-stone of this church was laid in 1873, and it is the church of the Catholic people of the north end of the city. Father Walsh is not an ostentatious man, but like his confreres who have seen the Catholic population increase and multiply, he is beloved and held in affection by his people.

Rev. Dr. Power, Mgr. Griffin, Father Scannell and Father Walsh are the four pastors around whom cluster the memories of the earlier Worcester Catholicity as it is known to-day, and there are probably no four pastors in any community who have served their people for a longer number of years or who are more beloved for the good they have accomplished. They have been safe counsellors and advisers to

those under their spiritual care, and their names will be indelibly associated with their churches long after they have gone from their temporal possessions to their eternal reward. Few pastors can point to such long-continued service in one city: Dr. Power, with forty years to his credit; Mgr. Griffin, thirty years; Father Scannell and Father Walsh with almost an equal number. What a lesson for good this in itself contains. The first pastor of the younger generation in Worcester is one who has given fame to the entire city. Rt. Rev. Dr. Conaty served both his curacy and his pastorate in this community. Of late years honors have crowded themselves upon him. At a banquet given at his elevation to the rectorship of the Catholic University, and which was attended by the most distinguished citizens of Worcester, he took occasion to say that he should always claim Worcester as his home. Dr. Conaty was the first pastor of the Church of the Sacred Heart. It is needless to say that his reputation is national. He is now a priest for quarter of a century. From the beginning he has been a public man. Prominent in every movement in church and state long before he became the director of higher Catholic education in this republic, his friendship was courted by statesmen of eminence in the nation. The city proudly claims him as one of its sons, and Protestant as well as Catholic is glorified by the high honors that have come to him.

Next in point of service among the Catholic pastors is Rev. D. H. O'Neil, who came to Worcester as a young curate more than twenty-five years ago. He built St. Peter's Church in 1884 and has been its only pastor. The remaining Irish Catholic church is St. Stephen's, whose territory was cut off from St. John's in 1887. The pastor, Rev. Daniel F. McGillicuddy, is Worcester born, bred and educated. He is the youngest Catholic pastor in point



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of years in the city. He is not so young, however, but that he is already distinguished as a man of much ability and sound financial judgment. He is not so much an orator as he is a man of capacity and able management. He is active in the temperance movement and is at present the president of the temperance societies of the diocese. With the exception of his predecessor at St. Stephen's, Father McGillicuddy is the only Worcester man a pastor in the home of his boyhood. Of the remaining Catholic churches in Worcester, three are devoted to the people of French nationality, one for the Italians and one for the Poles.

In mercantile and professional life men of Celtic birth and ancestry have made a satisfying progress in Worcester, and this has been specially striking during the past twenty years. In 1877, just a generation ago, there were not over three Catholic physicians in the entire city, and no larger number of lawyers. Now, of 176 practicing physicians of all schools, Catholics claim 35; and of 111 lawyers in practice 26 are Catholics. This large and rapid increase in the professions has not come from recent emigration, as it represents almost, if not entirely, those native born; but it is rather because the Irish are a race that obey the Biblical injunction to increase and multiply. This lesson of a twenty years' increase in the number of Catholic professional men indicates somewhat the probabilities of the future. But no calculation of Catholic progress now and hereafter ought to be made without pausing to consider the great debt that the present generation owes to its ancestors; not so much for what they as a class achieved, but rather for what they made it possible for the present generation to achieve. They laid the foundation, slow indeed at first, for the education of their children; and while they came without means and with a limited education themselves, they did possess the one essential of good

citizenship, submission to authority. The early Irish emigrants in Worcester, if they were rich in nothing else, might claim an abundance of faith, and that faith taught them submission to Divine authority, to the law of God, and submission to the constituted authorities of the land. In the earlier years of their residence it is not surprising that most of their children who received the training of a higher education followed in the footsteps of the Apostles in teaching their people how to live, to create and foster morality and to attain the maximum degree of human happiness.

Worcester Irishmen have given to the holy vocation of the priesthood not less than sixty of their sons—a remarkable showing for so short a space of time, but not more remarkable than the advancement made by their children on other lines. They are represented among the civil engineers, the chemists, the dentists and the electricians. They have their young men high in journalism and among the most influential of Worcester newspaper men. In mercantile life many have attained much success in a small way, but in the larger field of trade, finance and manufacture they are as yet almost without representation. Based on the Catholic population, wealth and progress, this is not as it should be. But with the results achieved in other directions and profiting by the lessons learned, the Catholics of Worcester may reasonably hope for a participation in these great interests in the coming years.

A brief review of Catholic progress in Worcester would be incomplete without a reference to the Catholic Hospital of St. Vincent's. Its situation is one of the best in Worcester for hospital purposes. Covering eight acres of ground, it occupies as healthful and commanding a site as could be desired. It is under the direction of a community of the Sisters of Providence, whose mother house is located at Holyoke. They have no permanent

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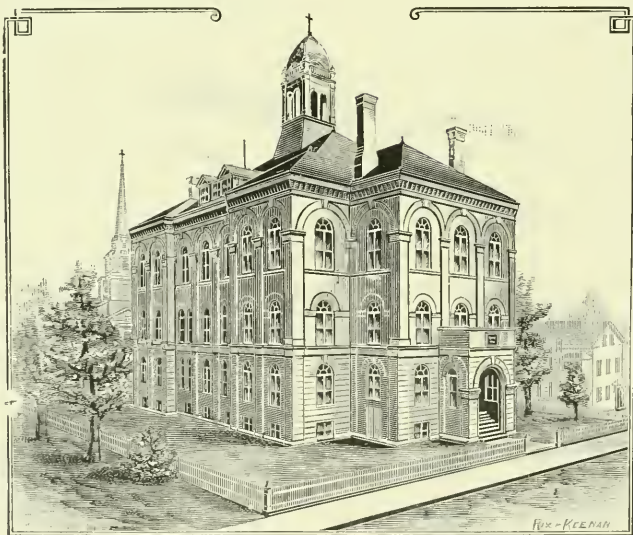
fund or endowment. It is not sectarian and is largely patronized by Protestants as well as Catholics.

Worcester Catholics are proud, as they have reason to be, of their Catholic military company. The Emmet Guards were organized more than forty years ago as a part of the militia of Massachusetts, but when fanaticism was rife, they, in connection with other Catholic companies, were disbanded by order of the State authorities; but this did not by any means quell their patriotic spirit, and when the call to arms was sounded in 1861 they were among the first to volunteer their services in defense of the flag. From their ranks were furnished no less than thirty-two commissioned officers, a noble record and one perhaps not exceeded by many companies during the rebellion. This company is perpetuated in the

Massachusetts militia of to-day by the sons of these men, and occupies a high place for its efficiency.

Besides the Washington Club, Worcester has many Catholic organizations. They include a council of the Knights of Columbus, a temperance organization in almost every parish and a number of divisions of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. They have their charitable societies, their Catholic Truth societies, and their Leagues of the Sacred Heart, all doing good, each in its own particular sphere.

In conclusion, I might reiterate what I emphasized in the beginning: Worcester is a good place to live in. And this thriving, growing, industrious inland city owes its present prosperity to no portion of its people more than it does to those of the Catholic faith.



ST. JOHN'S BOYS' SCHOOL, WORCESTER.  
ERECTED BY RT. REV. THOMAS GRIFFIN, D. D.

## A PROSPEROUS CATHOLIC CLUB IN CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS.

By JOHN J. RIORDAN, A. M.

There is no social organization in Worcester better or more favorably known than the Washington Club. For the past fifteen years it has been distinctively the leading Catholic society among the young men in the city, and it has always been notable for the scholarly attainments and versatile accomplishments of its members. Its theatrical productions which it occasionally presents at the Worcester Theatre are sure to attract the elite of the city, while its banquets and social gatherings are famed for their literary and social merit. It includes not one or two orators, but a score of brilliant speakers; and in years gone by every Catholic singer, almost without exception, has been found upon its roll of membership. Under such circumstances it is not strange that the Washington Club should be considered one of the controlling centres of the social and intellectual well-being of Worcester. It was organized in October, 1882, and incorporated in 1884. Its coming into existence was not the result of mature deliberation, nor was it because there was felt to be any need of such a society for the fuller enjoyment of social acquaintanceship. It was only a chance thought (suggested by a passing event) that led to its formation. A young man, one of a party of four,\* gathered in social converse,

expressed the opinion that a closer affiliation among a few young men, already closely bound together, might increase the happiness and pleasure of all. Acting upon this suggestion and without a single thought that this organization would be anything more than the binding more closely of a few congenial spirits, the promoters of the club called a meeting of those who would probably give an endorsement to the project. It began with an enrollment of seventeen, which formed the nucleus of the present membership of one hundred and forty. The beginning was humble, as befitted an organization of modest means and of youthful members, the age of its promoters, with few exceptions, being under twenty-one years; but it has grown and flourished, spreading out and extending its influence. The Washington Club was not the first organization among Catholic young men in Worcester to be noticed for the prominence of its members. It had a creditable predecessor in the Grattan Literary Society, which in its time included most of the Catholic young men of a literary turn of mind, and among whose members could be found more men in proportion to its membership who later entered the professions than probably any similar organization in the Commonwealth. Many of the present Catholic pastors in the Springfield Diocese were in their early Worcester days numbered as Grattans. It graduated lawyers and physicians who have since become famous, but at the organization of the Washington it was

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\*These four young men were Jno. J. Riordan, the first president of the club; James F. Guerin, the first secretary; Lawrence W. Lehy, the first treasurer, and M. F. Heffern, a member of the first board of directors, and later a secretary of the organization.

## WASHINGTON CLUB.



PHILIP J. O'CONNELL.

Philip J. O'Connell, LL. B., who is now president of the Washington Club, was born in Worcester in 1870. He graduated from the High School in 1889, and after a few years in business, entered the Boston University Law School, where he graduated LL. B. in 1895. He immediately entered upon the practice of law in Worcester, and has already built up a lucrative business. He was elected a member of the City Government in 1895, and re-elected for two years in 1896, and is considered the leader of the Democrats in that body. Mr. O'Connell is a forceful speaker and a ready debater, and has a promising career before him.

practically merged into it and soon afterwards passed out of existence.

Though the membership of the club is made up exclusively of men of the Catholic faith, it does not and never has discussed religious questions within its doors. Its members have at all times stood ready to lend a helping hand to any charitable cause, both in-

dividually and collectively, and this willingness has been often put to a test; but the club makes no claim of being beneficent in its purposes. Politics are proscribed and a member's political opinions are no criterion of his good fellowship. During all these years of vigorous, active life the only standard by which applicants for admission have been judged is their honesty in their dealings with their fellow-man and their respectability and probity of character. Perhaps this simple requirement has made the Washington Club the successful organization that it has proved itself to be.

While it is in no sense a boating club it maintains a handsome and commodious clubhouse at Lake Quinsigamond, the water resort of Worces-



JOHN J. RIORDAN, A. M.

First President, 1882 to 1883; 1885 to 1886



## WASHINGTON CLUB.

ter people. This lake nestles between the Worcester and Shrewsbury hills and is as delightful a sheet of water as can be found in the State. From end to end, for six miles, it stretches along through varying scenery beauti-

being practically split in the middle, which forbids a straightaway course for rowing. A movement recently undertaken to substitute a suspension bridge for the present roadbed promises to make this one of the four-



WASHINGTON CLUB HOUSE AT LAKE QUINSIGAMOND.

ful to contemplate. At its widest point it is, from shore to shore, about three-fourths of a mile in width. Here Harvard and Yale, a score of years ago, rowed their annual championship races; but for a number of years few important rowing events have taken place, owing to the course

nile rowing courses of the country. At the present time there are a full dozen clubhouses on the shores of this magnificent sheet of water, and most of them of elaborate proportions; but when the Washingtons decided to locate a summer home in 1886, only one clubhouse was to be found there.



## WASHINGTON CLUB.



MARK F. COSGROVE.

Mark F. Cosgrove, the third president of the Washington Club, is one of Worcester's prosperous business men. He has always been identified with the shoe trade since leaving school, and for the past five years has been proprietor of one of the leading shoe stores of the city. He was the first Grand Knight of Worcester Council of the Knights of Columbus, and he is also a member of the American Order of Foresters.

In 1887 the clubhouse was erected, and here the members are wont to gather in goodly numbers during the summer months, after the business of the day is over. The club grounds comprise an acre of land on the Shrewsbury side, with an uninterrupted view extending for three-quarters of a mile. This retreat is accessible by steamer, but not as readily reached by those who might come to the lake for a day's outing. The clubhouse was erected at an expense of over \$4,000 and has been added to and greatly improved. It was planned entirely for social pur-

poses and, with its broad verandas, affords an excellent place for the members to enjoy both the beautiful scenery of hills and woodland and the cool summer breezes which come down the lake at this, one of its broadest parts. The interior is all that a social club could desire. The first floor is given up to an extensive lobby, the dining-room, kitchen, lavatory and lockers for the members. The upper portion, where during the summer season many important social functions are held, includes a large assembly room and sleeping apartments for those members who make the clubhouse their home during this portion of the year. The bathing facilities are the best. Many of the members come especially for this recreation, and after enjoying a quiet lunch easily return to the city in the early evening for social or other engagements.

The city quarters of the club, practically from the beginning up to a year ago, were located on Front Street, opposite the Central Park in Worcester and near the centre of business. They were commodious and elegantly decorated. Handsomely furnished, they attracted the members in large numbers during the fall, winter and spring months. They comprised a parlor of extensive proportions, an assembly room and a billiard and pool room.

Few Catholic men of any prominence who have visited Worcester in the last ten years have failed to visit these rooms, while the impromptu spreads in their honor have been numerous and enjoyable, notably those which have been given to Irishmen who have lectured in Worcester in the Irish cause, and those given to American actors of Irish antecedents who have appeared in theatrical performances.

The club rooms were moved to a Main Street building in November a year ago. Quarters were specially prepared and fitted for its use and were

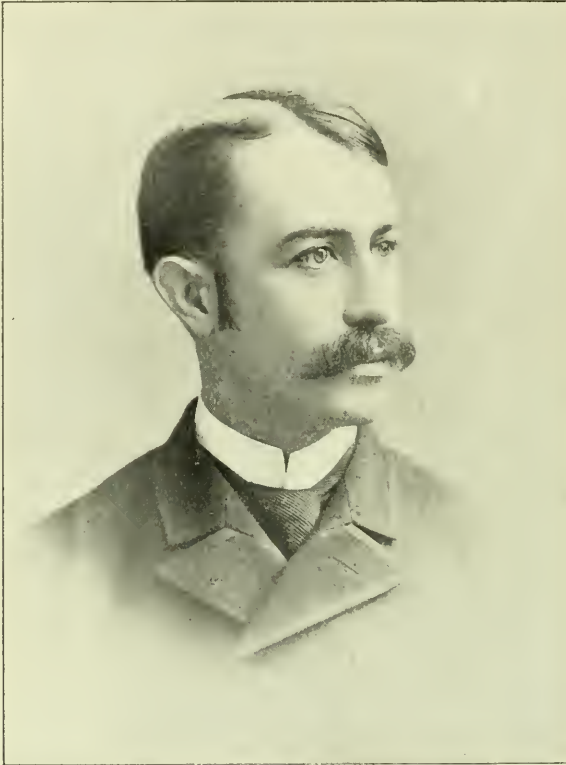
VIEW OF LAKE QUINSIGAMOND, SHOWING HOLY CROSS COLLEGE.



## WASHINGTON CLUB.

luxuriously furnished, but a disastrous fire in the early part of the present year literally razed the building to the ground, totally destroying everything,

Street, which it has handsomely decorated and refurnished. At one of the recent anniversary celebrations the orator of the evening, in a descriptive



JAMES F. GUERIN.

James F. Guerin was born in Worcester in 1862. After completing his education in the public schools, he entered the drug business and for ten years past has been one of the leading druggists of Worcester. He is a prominent member of the Massachusetts State Pharmaceutical Association, and is now serving his third year as Secretary of that Board. He is an ex-President of St. Anne's Temperance Society, and was a leading member of the Worcester

School Board for six years from 1887-1893, being one of the youngest men ever elected to that body. Mr. Guerin was the prime mover in organizing the Washingtons, serving as secretary for four years, as vice-president one year; and president two years, 1887-1889. He is also a member of the American Order of Foresters and of the A. O. H., is a trustee of St. Vincent's Hospital, and has been identified with all Catholic movements of late years in Worcester.

and with it went all the valuable possessions of the Washingtons, including costly paintings and elegant mementoes presented by other organizations. The club has just entered into new quarters in the building erected on the site of its former rooms on Main

review, among other good things, said:

"A city thrives and prospers in proportion to the number of skilled artisans it contains and in the means of employment it furnishes for them. How much more strongly can this be



## WASHINGTON CLUB.



THOMAS J. BARRETT.

Thomas J. Barrett, D. D. S., is a graduate of the Worcester schools and of the Philadelphia Dental College. He has been in practice as a dentist in Worcester for the past twelve years, and is very prominent in his profession. He was appointed by the late Governor Russell a member of the State Board of Dentistry, and re-appointed by Governor Wolcott. Dr. Barrett has been frequently mentioned for political office, but has always refused to be considered in that respect. He was the fourth president of the Washingtons, is president of the Wapiti Club, a member of the Elks, the Clover Club in Boston, and of many other organizations.

said of an organization which embraces active minds educated in many different directions, where all meet upon a common basis and where each may glean from those about him. When we remember that our membership is greatly varied it is little to be wondered at after all that we have prospered and have so much to be thankful for. In other cities young Catholic

men have organized clubs patterned after the Washington, and it is a pleasure to contemplate that our reputation has not confined itself to our own city, but has extended its influence throughout the State. In all the years of our existence I do not think that the club has taken a backward



M. J. P. McCAFFERTY.

M. J. P. McCafferty, the sixth president of the Washingtons, has been identified with Worcester interests since leaving school. He is the agent and superintendent of the Worcester Cycle Manufacturing Co., and previously the manager of the Worcester Steel Works. For twelve years from 1883 to 1895, Mr. McCafferty was a member of the Worcester School Board, serving for more than half of that period as the chairman of the important committee on Evening Schools, and is a trustee of St. Vincent's Hospital. Mr. McCafferty is a nephew of the late Judge McCafferty, and is a man of sterling worth, possessing the confidence of the entire community.



EDWARD J. McMAHON.

Edward J. McMahon, LL. B., graduated from the Worcester High School in 1881 and from the Boston University Law School in 1885, LL. B., cum laude. He has been in practice in Worcester since that time, and he has built up a large and lucrative clientage. He was a member of the Worcester City Government from 1889 to 1893, and was the Democratic leader in that body, serving on the most important committees. He has been the nominee of his party for District Attorney, Clerk of Courts and Senator for his district. He is well known as an orator of exceptional force and delivered the address in behalf of the laymen at the St. John's Parish Jubilee celebration, and he has frequently appeared as a public speaker. Mr. McMahon

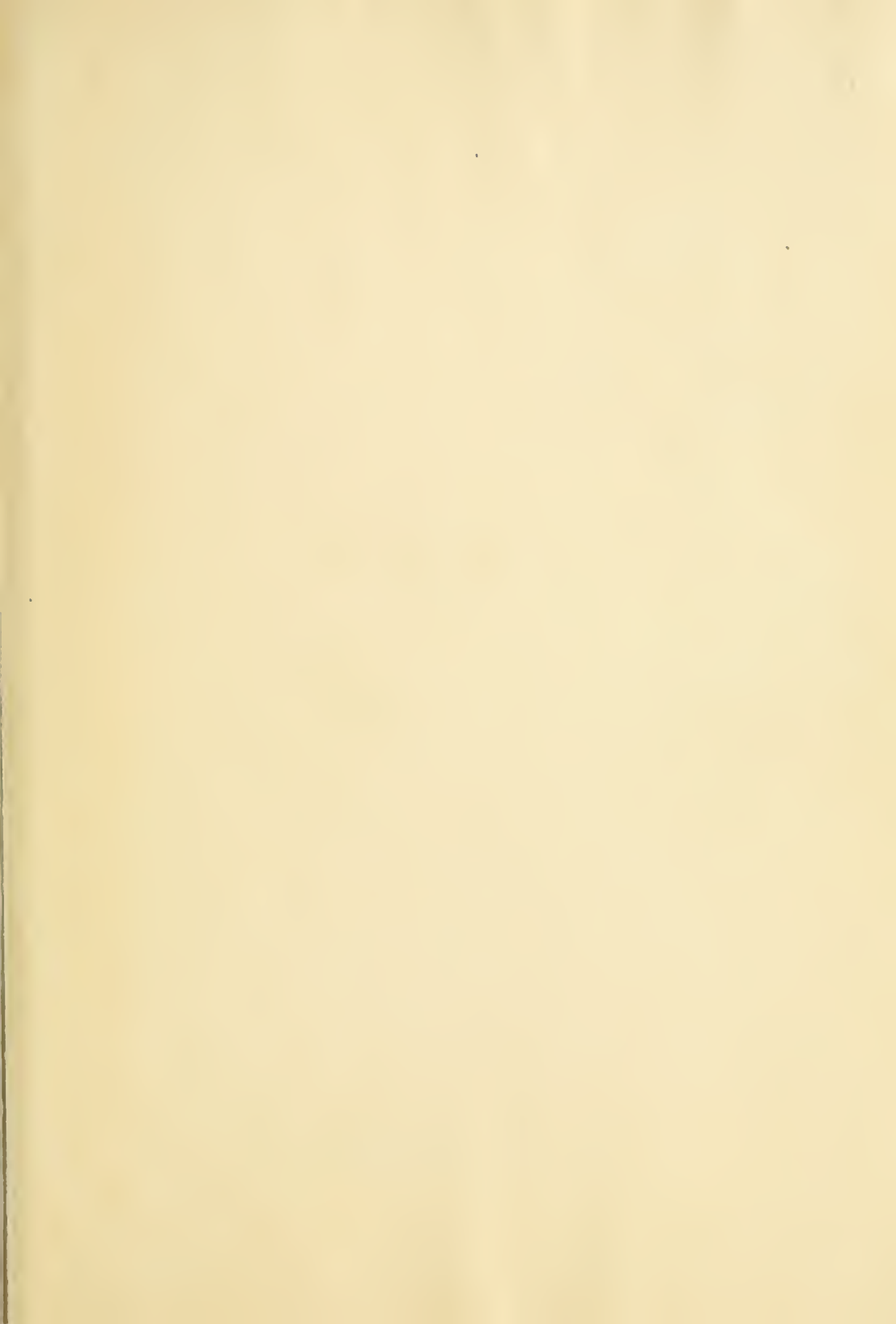
was the eighth president of the Washington Club. He is a Past Chancellor of the Knights of Columbus, a member of the A. O. H. and of the B. P. O. Elks, and is one of the most prominent of Worcester's younger citizens.

step. We have had the confidence and respect of our friends during these years, and never for a moment has there been any doubt of our retaining it, nor has it been even remotely suggested, as it has been so often said of social clubs, that the young man crossing our portals 'leaves himself open to serious danger of contamination.'

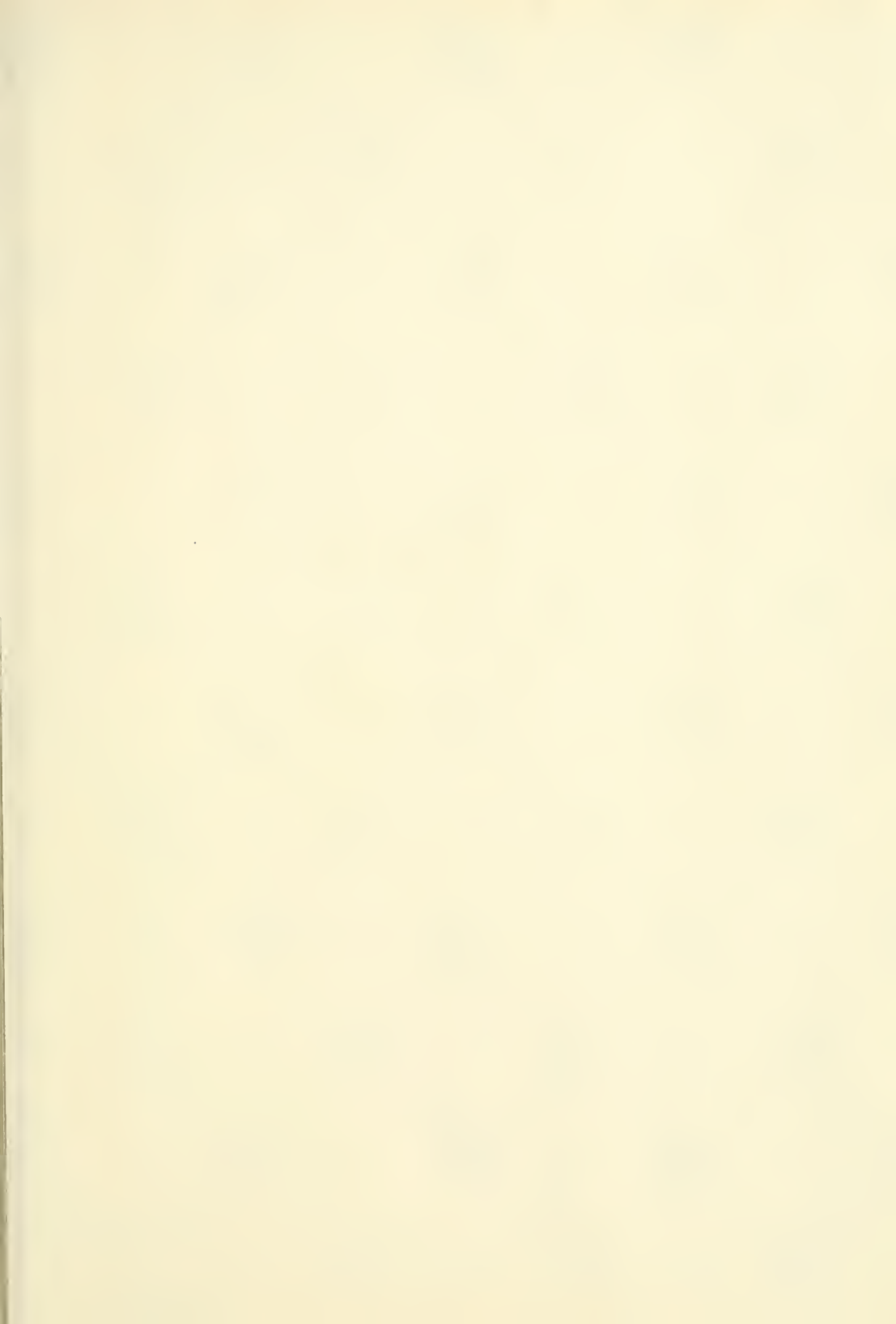
The minstrel performances, which were annual events for years, were the social events of Worcester. The club beyond most organizations is gifted with writers, singers and amateur actors, many of whom would adorn the professional boards. It has just entered upon the sixteenth year of its existence and gives promise of flourishing and continuing an important factor in the Heart of the Commonwealth for an indefinite number of years to come. The list of presidents upon whose shoulders has rested the responsibility of conducting the club's affairs includes the names of many gentlemen who are among the prominent citizens of Worcester. In the order of election they are as follows: John J. Riordan, 1882-83, 1885-86; John J. Casey, 1883-85; Mark F. Cosgrove, 1886-87; James F. Guerin, 1887-89; Thomas J. Barrett, 1889-91; M. J. P. McCafferty, 1891-92; Patrick O'Day, 1892-93; Edward J. McMahon, 1893-94; Edmund J. Somers, 1894-95; John B. Ratigan, 1895-96; Thomas H. Hall, 1896-97; Philip J. O'Connell, 1897.







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